

# New York Tribune

## Weekly Review of the Arts

### The Stage and its People

Sketches by Jefferson Macomer



Edgar Norton as the Ichneumon Fly in "The World We Live In."



Ann Mason in "The Last Warning"



Another sketch from "The World We Live In." Scott Cooper and Jane Corcoran as Beetles

## The Theaters

"Six Characters in Search of an Author"

By Percy Hammond

WE HAVE sometimes wondered what the emotion of Macbeth would be in case he saw himself acted by E. H. Sothern. Or what steps Julius Caesar might be impelled to take if he knew how weak and pompous a fellow he is as presented by Shakespeare to the ages. Would Marc Antony be pleased if he could hear himself as others hear him, forced to speak so clumsily a line in Caesar's funeral as, "I pause for a reply?"

Probably these and other gentlemen would rise up and complain about the play and players, objecting to them on the grounds of inaccuracy. Their plight is suggested, incidentally, in Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an Author." Here the characters in an unwritten drama, abandoned by their creator as too unruly for the purposes of the stage, wander into a theater, and plead with the manager to be allowed to live their own dramatic lives.

The result is chaos, and a wordy upsetting of the theory that the drama holds the mirror up to nature. First, the characters ridicule the actors who are supposed to play them because they are so "unlike and so little understanding." Then they contend with the stage director that they must in their play be as they are, and not limited in their actions by the traditions of the theater. They argue with themselves. One of them doesn't want to be in the play at all, contending that he doesn't belong in it. As they go through a scene in a questionable dressmaker's shop one of them, a young woman, starts to remove her dress for purposes dramatic but not necessary to report. "You can't do that!" the manager expostulates. "Why not?" is the reply, "I do it!"

That you may know how thoughtful some of the speeches are, here is one of them. It is spoken by the Father, who has been caught by the mother, flirting with the Step-Daughter, in the atelier of the dressmaking progress:

THE FATHER—For the drama lies all in this—in the conscience that I have, that each one of us has. We believe this conscience to be a single thing, but it is many-sided. There is one for this person and another for that. Diverse consciences. So we have this illusion of being one person for all, of having a personality that is unique in all our acts. But it isn't true. We perceive this when, tragically perhaps, in something we do, we are, as it were, suspended, caught up in the air on a kind of hook. Then we perceive that all of us was not in that act, and that it would be an atrocious injustice to judge us by that action alone, as if all our existence were summed up in that one deed. Now do you understand the perfidy of this girl? She surprised me in a place, where she ought not to have known me, just as I could not exist for her, and she now seeks to attach to me a reality such as I could never suppose I should have to assume for her in a shameful and fleeting moment of my life. I feel this above all else. And the drama, you will see, requires a tremendous value from this point.

All through the rehearsal the characters debate with the director about life, art, the theater and criticism, a contention in which the actors, grouped at one side of the bare stage, participate now and then. Eventually, as things seem progressing fairly well, a little girl suddenly jumps into a fountain and drowns herself; and her brother blows out his brains behind a tree. Whereupon the exasperated manager shoes them all out of his playhouse. "Nothing doing!" he exclaims in effect. "We'll put on 'The Bride's Revenge'."

Brook Pemberton, the producer, doesn't seem to have much faith in the play, since he announces that its engagement is limited to four weeks. "Morons will not be admitted," he adds, explaining why the run will be so brief. The comedy is beautifully acted by a typical Theater Guild cast, with Miss Margaret Wycherley as the Mother, Moffet Johnson as the Father, Miss Florence Eldridge as the Step-Daughter and Ernest Cossart as the theatrical manager. A remarkably interesting play for the conscientious, even if it does turn out to be as ephemeral as its pessimistic producer seems to expect.

If we were a dramatist, desiring some of our pet passions to be torn to pleasing tatters, we should petition Miss Helen Menken, of "Seventh Heaven," to perform the lacerations. No young actress, we think, knows her way about a suffering woman's heart so well as Miss Menken does. Give her an anguish or a despair or two for treatment and she will better it with poetic improvements. Hers is not the mere rhetoric of acting, but its stormy, uncharted eloquence lashing (if one may be permitted to say so) the canvas shores of emotional histrionism.

Therefore, while you may not unequivocally recommend Mr. Strong's "Seventh Heaven" as a seventh heaven of the theater, you may commit yourself to Miss Menken's performance in it. Poor little Diane, the Parisian, though reluctant cut-purse! She will not object, as the characters do in Mr. Pirandello's play, to the manner of her reproduction upon the stage. Miss Menken, we think, would please her as a satisfactory counterfeiter. Especially when, in a lovely gale of emotional abandon, she opens the window of her celestial garret and shouts hysterical adieu to her Chico (George Gail) as he passes below with his regiment, en route to mobilization. "Seventh Heaven" may be sweet and slow in many of its aspects, but never while Miss Menken is performing her lovely and artistic tantrums.

### mosquito net no aid against spot light says archy

by archy

I am always late for shows it seems to me perhaps because being a cockroach even if I am the favorite and have been named archy and everything by my boss don marquis I am only an insect at that and have to eat after the rest of the family get finished even after I wrote the old soak for don it didn't make any difference mrs marquis said I might think I was a playwright but after all I was nothing but a cockroach and I guess she's right well the other night I was in the kitchen wondering what I would have to eat when some synthetic gin was spilled on me even a cockroach isn't safe any more since prohibition kitchens used to be for cooking and eating for us cockroaches when I was a lad but now there is no telling what kind of juice they are going to mix with oranges and lemons

anyhow I wasn't feeling as well as I have felt for purely critical purposes after I got my synthetic gin bath when I heard mr fox say to don say don how about having archy go and review this the world we live in at al jolson's theater it is an insect play and who could appreciate a thing like that half so well as archy

well mr fox and don were through dinner but I had just started mine and I didn't stick my head out of the drain pipe till they were almost going away without me I have to eat the reason I am mentioning all this stuff about eating is that because of it I missed the prologue of the world we live in after we had got there late and missed the prologue mr fox said I don't care much for the epilogue ha ha I thought to myself why are you here for the second time in two nights listening to the world we live in then

to the crime-dramas. Mr. Housum is so full of ingenuities that after sailing along gracefully for three acts he bursts out like a Roman candle at the end and mars the finish with foolish fireworks. Nevertheless, if you are unable to get seats for Stuart Walker's "The Book of Job" or "The Greenwich Village Follies" take a remote chance with "Persons Unknown." It has its virtues.

The many words we have just written about "The Insect Comedy," at Jolson's Theater, have been banished by the make-up men to the place where, doubtless, they belong. We are permitted this morning to say, however, that, like life, the play is great if you don't weaken. In case you regard it seriously as a Message, which, certainly it is, you will seek a bridge whereof to jump, or a subway train before which you may cast yourself in suicide. It teaches as that the Life of the insects is no more praiseworthy than the Life we, ourselves, lead. That butterflies are as decadent as certain suspected persons of our acquaintance; that the "sharded beetle" is as greedy and accumulative as is the average business man, and that the Red and the Yellow Ants practice the twin follies of Work and War. As a dark, forbidding and platitudinous fantasia, lit by Satire, and admirable stage direction, "The Insect Comedy" is something to see. That real and ruthless approximation of a battle between the ant tribes is as impressive an example of propaganda and the theater as you will ever encounter in a Broadway playhouse. It is, among other things, a fine justification for Mr. W. A. Brady, its remorseful entrepreneur.

### New Theatrical Offerings

"UP SHE GOES"—William A. Brady will present a musical version of "Too Many Cooks," Frank Craven's comedy, at the Playhouse to-morrow night. Frank Craven himself has written the book and the music and lyrics are, respectively, by Harry Tierney and Joseph McCarthy, the men who were responsible for "Frene." In the cast are Donald Brian, Gloria, Foy, Helen Bolton, Richard ("Skeets") Gallagher, Frederick Graham, Teddy McNamara, George Williams, Lou Ripley, Jenny Weathersbee and others.

"CROWNS"—This play, by John Luther Long, will be the first offering of the new Players' Company, opening to-morrow night at the Provincetown Theater. Mr. Long, who is remembered for "Madame Butterfly," went to Syria for the locale of this drama. Cleon Throckmorton created the stage settings. Included in the company of players are Marguerite Mower, Carl Glick, Victor Hammond, Herbert Ashton Jr., A. R. L. Patterson, Roland Twombly, James Meishan, Frederick Miller, Lester Schaefer, Benjamin Kauer, Frank Dawson, Mary Donnelly, Felicia Drewiak and Josephine Hutchinson.

"THE 49ERS"—Musical bits, dances, skits, burlesques, pantomimes and other things are promised by this new organization, which will give its first performance for the public Tuesday night at the Punch and Judy Theater under the management of George C. Tyler. George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, besides contributing their writing efforts, are the authors of the group. May Irwin will be the trail blazer. Among the authors who will be represented, besides those mentioned, are Montague Glass, Heywood Brown, Franklin P. Adams, Ring Lardner, Robert C. Benchley, Dorothy Parker, Morris Ryskind, Walter Kuhn, Robert E. Sherwood, Howard Dietz, Bertram Bloch, Deems Taylor, Lewis Gensler and Arthur H. Samuels. Those who will appear on the stage are Roland Young, Beryl Mercer, Sidney Toler, Denman Mayle, Howard Lindsay, Sol Friedman, Ruth Gilmore, Albert Carroll, Alitta, Margot Myers, Devah Morel, Angela Warner, Clyde Hunnewell, Allen Fagan, Philip Mann, Gladys Burgetts, Frank Lyon, Easton Yonge, Ira Uhr, Lewis Barrington, Ward Fox, Monica Moore, Louise Hunter, Jeanne Chambers and Brenda Bond.

"RAIN"—Sam H. Harris will bring this play, written from W. Somerset Maugham's story "Miss Thompson," to Maxine Elliott's Theater on Tuesday evening, with Jeanne Eagels in the principal role. John Colton and Clemence Randolph are the authors. The cast includes Fritz Williams, Rapley Holmes, Emma Wilcox, Robert Kelly, Katherine Brook, Robert Elliott, Shirley King, Harry Quealy, Kathryn Kennedy, Harold Healy, Kent Thurber, Bhandia Whitehawk and several Samoan natives. John D. Williams staged the play.

and almost while I was still wondering there were some moths or butterflies or beetles or something that came out and did a dance being an insect to me like some young ladies who had wrapped themselves all up in some mosquito netting and had forgotten to put on their winter underwear there was a spotlight that may be was supposed to make the young ladies look more like moths or butterflies or beetles or the world we live in or something but I couldn't help but think here was something better for a tired business man than for a tired cockroach who had begun the evening with some synthetic gin on his back

of course I could see where I would get off with don marquis the old soak at the plymouth theatre or anyhow he calls it his old soak although I wrote myself I may be wrong but they looked it if I said anything nice about the world we live in without mentioning the old soak so I am mentioning the old soak just once for good luck

I forget what I was going to write about the world we live in except that it being an insect play I was supposed to imagine that the young ladies in the mosquito netting were moths and it was a tough job to put on an insect especially a cockroach that has some education because I could see the young ladies swapping the mosquito nettings for some skirts and going right home and forgetting they were moths and chasing my second cousins down the sink with a fly swatter without any spot light or any tired business man to pep them up either

however there was an ichneumon fly I remember and some snails and a larva and a lot of things like that I am sorry that being only a cockroach I can't say anything else about the world we live in at al jolson's theater except that as one insect to another I would see it if I lived in a family with which I could travel without getting beaten up the best way I think is on the back of the neck

any mosquito who wouldn't be able to get through that netting wouldn't be worthy of the name of mosquito or even of insect

as a cockroach I was asked my opinion of the world we live in I would say because I think it is the best diplomacy that the old soak at the plymouth theatre is a good show for a cockroach to see and that the world we live in at al jolson's theatre is a good show for a cockroach to see and also for a tired business man who doesn't mind waiting two or three acts to see some moths who are not really moths at all but are very nice young ladies trying to keep a spot light away from them with a cheese cloth that is one thing that mr brady has not done very well he has not given the young ladies a very good protection against a spot light the next time he comes up to see don I will tell him about it

I heard somebody say that the show happened between two blades of grass when I was there doug fairbanks and mary pickford were there too and the show happened as nearly as I could make out between two looks one at the world we live in and the other at doug and mary and they had a girl with her who was a tall brunette with a gold band around her hair and everybody except me being only an insect I suppose wondered who she was and said she was very pretty but mr fox who is supposed to know everything about Broadway and vida reed who was with mr fox and me I guess mrs fox was home making chili she make it very good I am told by some friends of mine who live at the foxes

I forgot to say something about the play which impressed me very much and that was that I was in the play a half an hour before I saw bob edson with a bear sleeping on a sofa but he would wake up every now and then and talk to some ants or some beetles or some moths and then go back to sleep again and finally he died

I liked the show very much because it taught me if nothing else two things they are that nobody even a cockroach can live for ever and that the kind of mosquito netting the young lady moths wear cannot baffle the spot light they use in the jolson's theater.

#### A New Keith Theater

The new B. F. Keith Palace Theater in Cleveland, Ohio, will be opened to-morrow night. The structure, which is said to have cost \$5,000,000, is dedicated to the memory of Benjamin Franklin Keith, founder of the Keith Circuit.

#### Drama League Meeting

Brook Pemberton will speak on "The Business Management of a Theater" before the members of the New York Drama League this afternoon at the Earl Carroll Theater.

#### Italian Variety Artists

Nicola Maldacea and the company of Italian variety artists who appeared with him at the Teatro Caruso will appear this afternoon and evening at the Selwyn Theater.

## The Playbill

A Bulletin of Who's Who and What's What

By Beauvais Fox

LONG, flat wagons, piled high with scenery, will be more in evidence than ever within the next week or two. 'Tis always busy moving days for Broadway productions following election. At the end of this week "Captain Applejack" will take his deck of aces to Boston, leaving the Cort open for "Merton of the Movies"; "It's a Boy" will leave the Sam H. Harris to make room for JOHN BARRYMORE in "Hamlet," "Kempy" will look for plumbing jobs at the Selwyn, Chicago, to be followed here by "A Clean Town"; "The Monster," strong man, laboratory and all, will go on tour, to be replaced by MME. SOREL and the players from the Comedie Francaise at the Thirty-ninth Street Theater; "Queen o' Hearts" will slip out of the George M. Cohan Theater, giving over the stage to "The Love Child"; "Malvaloca" will forsake the Equity Forty-eighth Street Theater, retiring in favor of "Hospitality," and "George White's Scandals" will take to the road, abandoning the Globe first to "Molly Darling," which will move over from the Liberty, and later "The Bunch and Judy," which opens in Philadelphia to-morrow and is scheduled to arrive on Broadway this month. Two weeks hence "Her Temporary Husband" will close at the Frazee and the Theater Guild will send "R. U. R.," joining uptown from the Garrick, and the robots will find a resting place at the Frazee.

MORE is not in Europe at the present time, making pictures, as had been reported, but is in town. Looks as if "The Fountain" may not be far off after all. . . . A. H. WOODS may join with GEORGE MCCLELLAN in the production here of "Gri Gri," the musical comedy which was put on in London. . . . GERTRUDE PURCELL, who, with LEILA TAYLOR, wrote "Voltaire," will be one of the extras in ARTHUR HOPKINS'S production of "Hamlet." One hears that there are to be not more than a dozen extras in all, six male and six female. . . . GUTHRIE MCCLINTON'S first production of the season, it is reliably reported, will be "Gringo," and it will come in late this month. This is the play by SOPHIE TREADWELL, who is the wife of W. O. McGeehan, sports editor of "The New York Herald." . . . The South is taking kindly to DE WOLF HOPPER'S appearance in Gilbert and Sullivan. . . . A new play by HARRY WAGSTAFF GRIBBLE will soon be placed in rehearsal. . . . J. P. McEVoy has dramatized "The Potters," a newspaper serial of domestic life, and FRANK CRAVEN is said to be considering it for his next starring venture. . . . JULIA SANDERSON will be seen in "Tangerine" at Teller's Shubert, Brooklyn, next week, her last engagement this year in New York City. . . . A report persisted this week that A. L. ERLANGER and CHARLES DILLINGHAM were arranging to erect a music hall in West Forty-fourth Street and that the policy will resemble that of the Weber and Fields music hall. Rumored engagements for the permanent cast include the names of WILLIAM COLLIER, SAM BERNARD and FLORENCE MOORE. . . . CLAUDE ROGERS MARX, grandson of KARL MARX, has written a comedy, "La Pensionnaire," which is playing at the Theatre des Arts in Paris. . . . JAMES K. HACKETT has been invited to appear as Shylock in "The Merchant of Venice" and as "Hamlet" at the Odeon in Paris. . . . PHILIP BARTHOLOMAE'S "Barnum Was Right" will be presented in Atlantic City to-morrow by LOUIS F. WERBA. . . . "Sally" is to be done in Budapest, the story goes, with IRENE PALASTY in the rôle created here by MARILYN MILLER. Next fall she expects to make her American debut in an operetta which is now being written for her by JEAN GILBERT, SCHANZER and WELISCH, the men who are responsible for "The Lady in Ermine." . . . MARIE SHOTWELL is appearing in support of NANCE O'NEIL in "Field of Ermine," the BENAVENTE play which is soon to come to New York. . . . There will be a ballet in the SELWYN'S production of "Johannes Kreisler." It will be staged by FO-

KINE. Because of the novel mechanical features which will be introduced in the production it is said that BEN-AMI and his associate players will never see the audience. . . . The Phoenix Theater Corporation, a new organization, is making arrangements to present "Take a Chance," a musical play by HAROLD ORLOB and H. I. PHILLIPS. . . . LAWRENCE GRANT, HENRIETTA TILLMAN and ALBERT HACKETT will be in George M. Cohan's Chicago company of "So This is London," which will open at the Grand, Chicago, next month. . . . One hears that the new musical play in which Sam H. Harris will present the Duncan Sisters will be called "Face to Face."

There will be a meeting at the Equity Forty-eighth Street Theater this afternoon for Equity Players' subscribers and their friends. Heywood Brown, Rodolph Valentino, Clayton Hamilton and Bruce McRae will speak.

The Lenox Hill Players will begin their season at the Lenox Theater on East Seventy-eighth Street to-morrow night with "The Pardon," from the French of Jules Le Maitre; "The Green Scarf," by Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, and "The Other Voice," by S. K. Fairbanks.

The second bill of the season will be presented for a run of three weeks at the Threshold Playhouse, beginning to-morrow night—"Punk," by Henry Clapp Smith; "Miss Betty," by Mrs. C. Piquette Mitchell; "Off Nag's Head," by Douglas MacMillan, and "Trash," by Lloyd F. Thanousser.

### Three Actors Who Made Good in Quick Order

In March, 1916, there came a Broadway and to the Lyceum Theater a vivid melodrama called "The Heart of Wotons," written by George Scarborough and produced by David Belasco.

The three principal male roles were played by William Courtleigh, Lowell Sherman and John Milten. It now so happens that these actors, within a week, have come to Broadway, each in a different play and each in roles of great importance in their respective plays.

And with Lenore Ulric—in 1916 she spelled it "Ulrich"—apparently settled down for life over at the Belasco, there are enough of the "Wetona" players now in the current White Way attractions to stage a reunion. Miss Ulric, as will be recalled, gave a memorable performance as the Indian maid in "The Heart of Wotons."

It might be of interest to reproduce an excerpt or two from a published review of the play:

As to Mr. Courtleigh: "William Courtleigh lost his identity completely in that of Quannah, the Indian chief. He was an Indian whom one really could fear."

As to Mr. Milten: "John Milten was the super-hero. He was a quiet, well-mannered and thorough hero."

As to Lowell Sherman: "Lowell Sherman was the caddish Tony Wells and deserved countless hisses that he did not receive."

Mr. Courtleigh, who is now appearing in the new Broadway hit, "The Last Warning," was associated with Lenore Ulric on one other occasion—when he appeared with her in "Tiger Rock."